

Memories of the Unknown

In her work *I long for a place I don't know*, Ana Domljan creates a fictional archive through which she explores the emotional landscapes of memory and imagination. Using objects, sound, video, and cyanotype, the artist evokes fragments of space and time, creating an atmosphere imbued with nostalgia and a yearning for a place that has never existed—yet, through memory and emotion, feels tangibly real. Each artefact becomes a vessel of nostalgia, symbolizing an attempt to capture the elusive—a place that exists between the real and the imagined, the past and the present.

As the French phenomenologist Gaston Bachelard writes in his work *The Poetics of Space*, space is not merely a physical environment but is shaped through memories, reverie and imagination. Through emotional projection, intimate spaces are transformed into sanctuaries of nostalgia and creativity. In Ana Domljan's work, objects become traces of such emotional projections—each one imbued with the memory of an unknown space, a place that is both real and imaginary.

The objects, carefully selected for their transformation by the sea and the passage of time, evoke feelings of nostalgia and imagination, becoming traces of memories from unknown spaces—places that exist and do not exist simultaneously, much like the sanctuaries of imagination Bachelard describes. Though each object has followed its own journey, it still bears remnants of its original form, creating a transition between the real and the imagined, the found and the lost, the past and the present.

The sounds and images accompanying the exhibited objects act as a bridge between the viewer's consciousness and their emotional landscapes. Through soundscapes such as forests or waves, the work evokes feelings of nostalgia, solitude and serenity – feelings that arise in intimate spaces of imagination, where space is filled with its own meanings. These ambient sounds create an atmosphere that is not only an emotional reflection of the space but an invitation to introspection and rediscovery of personal longings. Sound and video become guides through imaginary landscapes of nostalgia, creating a space where tranquillity and melancholy meet, a sense of peace that coexists with sadness for what is unattainable.

The way in which the collected objects are exhibited mimics the museological approach to archaeological artefacts, evoking the idea of space as a repository of memory. Thus, the objects become souvenirs of past feelings, inviting viewers to recognize their own memories of lost or unknown places.

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In addition to objects, sound and video, an important element of the work is the large-format cyanotype, which further emphasizes the theme of remembering and imprinting the past upon the present. The blue hues of the cyanotype, as a trace of light and time, become a visual counterpart to the melancholic atmosphere of the work, creating a layered dialogue between the material and the ephemeral.

By exploring the boundaries between the real and the imagined and focusing on the personal feeling of nostalgia and longing for something that has always been, yet never existed, the work *I long for a place I don't know* becomes both an introspective dialogue and a universal commentary on the human aspiration for solace in the elusive landscapes of memory and imagination.

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